

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. CLAIM STATUS AND AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-2 were pending in this application when last examined.

Claim 1 was rejected.

Claims 1 and 2 were objected.

Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer thereto. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation or divisional application on any canceled subject matter.

Support for the amendment to claim 2 can be found in original claims 1-2.

New claims 3 and 4 have been added.

Support for new claim 3 can be found in the disclosure, for example, at page 5, lines 9-11, and in Examples 1-3 and 8.

Support for new claim 4 can be found in the disclosure, for example, at page 6, lines 2-5, and in Examples 4-7.

No new matter has been added by the above claim amendments.

Claims 2-4 are pending upon entry of this amendment.

Applicants appreciate the Office's indication of allowable subject matter in items 4 and 5 on page 2 of the Office

Action, wherein it was indicated claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 has been so amended to independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of claim 1.

It should further be noted that new claims 3 and 4 depend on revised independent claim 2. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4 should be in condition for allowance.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful examination of this case, and respectfully request reexamination and reconsideration of the case, as amended. Below Applicants address the rejections levied in the Office Action, and explain why the rejections are not applicable to the pending claims as amended.

II. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Attached to the Action was a copy of the PTO-1449 Form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) of January 5, 2006. On this copy, the Examiner starred numerous of the cited references.

However, by starring the references, it is unclear whether or not this is an indication that the references have been officially considered. Also, kindly note that there was no star or initial next to the following references: U.S. 3,810,850

and EP 126454. Furthermore, there was no indication in the Office Action as to whether or not the cited references were officially considered.

Therefore, please clarify whether the cited references have been officially considered by the Office and return an Examiner-initialed copy of Form PTO-1449 indicating such.

III. ANTICIPATION REJECTION

In item 3 on page 2 of the Office Action, claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by BARTE et al.

This rejection is now moot in view of the incorporation into claim 1 of the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore solicited.

IV. CLAIM OBJECTIONS

In item 4 on page 2 of the Office Action, claim 1 was objected to as failing to end with a period.

Claim 2 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The present amendment overcomes these objections. Again, claim 1 has been canceled and claim 2 has been amended to independent form as suggested by the Office.

V. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early notice to that effect is hereby requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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